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The Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1969
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MICCA Festival
LHS hosted the three-day MICCA Concert Festival, and several LHS groups performed.
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LHS Fencing Club
Created by Anna Zhou and Claudia Sun this year, the LHS Fencing Club has taken off.
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Volume LVII Issue V — April 2015

Steigerwald, Hurley re-elected, gain new posts

■ **Niha Putta**
Staff Writer

In the Lexington elections on March 2, Jessie Steigerwald and Bill Hurley were elected as the fourth and fifth members of the School Committee.

Steigerwald and Hurley, the incumbents, were up for re-election against Tom Diaz, who sought to return to the School Committee after a five year absence.

Out of the 3,331 ballots cast, Hurley earned 2,218 votes, Steigerwald earned 1,948 votes, and Diaz earned 1,518 votes.

After the election, the School Committee appointed Steigerwald as Chairman and Hurley as Vice Chairman.

This was Steigerwald's third election for School Committee. Her plan in office is four-fold.

Steigerwald wrote in an email that her plans include "working with [her] committee to set meaningful goals to help decrease unhealthy student stress, finding ways to foster inspiration so students and staff experience joy through learning and teaching, improving communication with families, and as they support students and partner with school staff, and expanding community engagement so more students may draw upon the amazing talent that many Lexington residents are willing to share."

Steigerwald's focus for the schools goes beyond academics.

"We also must constantly promote physical, mental, social and emotional health," she wrote.

Steigerwald said she sought to reach a wide range of voters in her campaign.

"Throughout the campaign I aimed to get my message out to every voter. I try to share my views in a clear way and with balance," said Steigerwald.

Hurley could not be reached for comment.

Diaz wrote in an email, "[I] was especially focused on meeting parents with younger children, since many of my supporters from my previous School Committee service (2004–2010) have kids who are now high school or college students."

Jennifer Ray, Diaz's campaign manager, said the candidates targeted two generations of voters: "those who currently have children in school and those who are on the older side who may or may not have had kids go through the LPS."

"[His] campaign addressed these issues head on through coffees, forums and published documents (letters to the editor, etc.)," Ray wrote in an email.

Diaz said he focused on accommodating the increasing population of Lexington students and addressing student stress in his campaign.

"I persuaded many parents that I had the most candid and detailed approach to the building plans. I was also able to speak about stress and many other issues for students with the first-hand knowledge of a modern teacher" Diaz wrote.

Courtesy of Jessie Steigerwald

Although all three candidates made attempts to appeal to voters, the 2015 election had one of the lowest turnouts of all recent Lexington elections.

"Only 16 percent of registered voters participated," Ray wrote.

Departments add courses for upcoming school year

■ **Ethan Kleppner**
Elizabeth Nakhtigal
Staff Writers

The English department, mathematics department and science department have all added new courses and modified existing ones for the 2015-2016 school year.

English department head Jane Day said that the Reading and Writing Beyond the Canon course was renamed Senior Literature and Composition.

"Although the course content has not changed, the name change to Senior Lit and Comp was made because it better reflects what the course is all about and it makes more sense to colleges as they read transcripts," wrote Day in an email interview.

In addition, the department is offering a new senior elective course called Shame and Shaming in Literature. According to the LHS Course Catalog, "[this course] explores sources of shame rooted in history, culture, family, and the individual."

Students will study texts such as "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison, "Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka, "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare, "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" by Thomas Hardy, "Disgrace" by J.M. Coetzee, and "Shame" by Salman Rushdie.

The math department has also created new courses. Department head Kevin Kelly said that courses "Math 4B/5A" and "Contemporary Applied Math" have been added for seniors.

"Math 4B/5A was added to complete a new sequence of courses (1B/2A, 2B/3A, 3B/4A)," Kelly wrote in an email. "Contemporary Applied Math was added to give seniors an additional elective choice."

The science department is now offering an Honors Chemistry course for juniors. According to the Course Catalog, this course is being designed to "provide a comprehensive study of chemistry for highly motivated, independent students who have in an interest in the subject," as opposed to AP Chemistry which is a "college level course." The prerequisites (completing Math 3 or "exceptional performance" in Math 2B/3A) and corequisites (a teacher recommendation along with Math 4 or 3B/4A) for Honors and AP Chemistry are the same.

Kari Darling, a LHS teacher of both Level 1 and AP Chemistry, said that the science department "wanted to give students a little bit more … freedom in choosing a class that would be challenging, but not necessarily catered toward the APs."

Editorial

LHS may lack conventional school spirit, but makes up for it with other achievements.

With the absence of events such as field day, pep rallies, homecoming and spirit assemblies, it might appear that Lexington High School has a disunited population with a lack of school spirit. To combat this, the administration and student body make efforts to promote school spirit by taking pride in high MCAS scores and hosting events such as spirit week and the annual intramural volleyball and dodgeball tournaments. This is effective to a certain degree, but these are only short term events. On a regular day, factors such as the school's large, diverse and competitive student body lead to the lack of school spirit.

Ranging from athletes to academic team members, our diverse student population helps foster small separate communities with peers of the same interests. Students are often centered around their own individual activities, creating a population of students who are proud of their own efforts instead of the school as a whole.

The competitive nature amongst LHS students also has an effect on the level of school spirit. At the end of the day, some students' main goal is to get into their dream college, which pushes them to prioritize and focus on their education over things like school spirit. The constant competition also creates a self-interested population, detracting from focus on the community.

Competition amongst students may block the presence of school spirit, but rivalry against neighboring towns could actually foster more school spirit at LHS. If the school had an intense rivalry against another town for sports and academic competitions, then students would likely be more involved and excited for the events. However, since each individualized community has its own rivals, students only get excited for their own competitions which again fragments the school into isolated groups.

Despite the evidence against the presence of school spirit at LHS, there are many events that bring students together. For example, LHS has a strong music culture as big concerts or other performances serve as a meeting point for students, both musical and non-musical, to spend time together. The seasonal a cappella Jams are a prominent example of this, as are major concerts such as the end-of-year Pops. In addition to music, school-wide sporting competitions such as the annual intramural dodgeball and volleyball tournaments allow students, athletes and nonathletes alike, to break the usual individualistic barriers between themselves and come together.

In addition, let's also not skim over the fact that LHS takes great pride in its academic achievements. More

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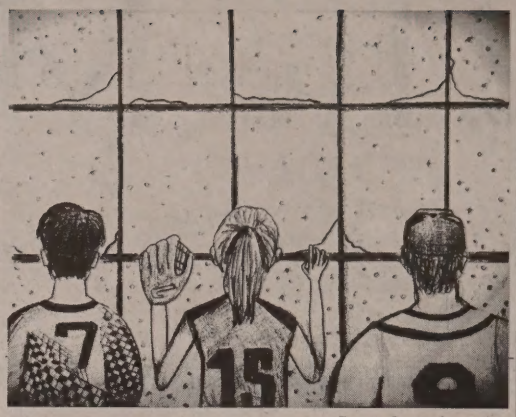
Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of the majority of the editorial board.



Comic by Noha Yehia

LHS culture engenders excessive stress over standardized testing

■ Grace Wu
Staff Writer

The SAT has garnered a notorious reputation as the college entrance exam that all high schoolers must endure at some point in order to progress with their studies. It is no surprise that this academic hurdle has fostered a correspondingly hefty amount of anxiety.

In the culture Lexington High School high achievers, establish this pressure has become a pervasive presence among students that may begin as early as underclassman years before exploding dur-

[SAT, page 7]

Netanyahu's speech to U.S. Congress was misguided

■ Max Saltman
Staff Writer

On March 3, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu came to the United States to speak before Congress about a hypothesized nuclear deal with Iran. Netanyahu has stated for the past 19 years that Iran is on the brink of procuring nuclear weapons and insisted in his speech that any sort of agreement would ultimately lead to the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people as a whole.

As a Jew with Israeli interests in mind, I found Netanyahu's speech to be insidious. Scheduled eerily close to the Israeli elections, his visit to the U.S. was clearly a political move, seeing as how footage of his speech was incorporated into a campaign ad later on. Despite this, Netanyahu insisted that the politicization of his remarks were "never intended."

As an American, I felt insulted when I became aware that Netanyahu and House Speaker John Boehner ar-

[ISRAEL, page 7]

Detentions: punishment or productivity?

■ Nikki Kim
Mandy Quan
Staff Writers

All eyes are on the clock. Tick-tock, tick-tock, just a few more seconds before 3:30, when Lexington High School student offenders are freed from their hour-long detention.

Detentions are seen as a last resort, but necessary tool to keep the student population in line.

"I think [detention] definitely works as a deterrent," Dean Scott Kmack said. "I don't think there's any student who enjoys giving up a portion of their afternoon to in the Science Lecture Hall."

Meant to teach obedience and discourage misconduct, detentions have been around for decades. But how effective are they? In reality, they have very little real use.

Anyone who has ever received a detention before will know that all it entails is sitting in the science lecture hall with a few other "delinquents" from 2:30 to 3:30. No music, talking or electronics are allowed.

But detentions are nothing like punishment. Some might even say that the hour can be very productive work time. In the dead silence, students are able to fly through lots of homework without any distractions.

While detention does not feel like a reward for students, it is certainly useless when it comes to correcting bad behavior. Instead of going home

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Snow days force AP teachers to rush through curricula

Staff photo by Susie Kim

Lexington High School had several closings because of snowstorms this winter, and the snow is still delaying spring sports seasons.

■ Lizzie Case
Staff Writer

Although the numerous snowstorms this winter have made it difficult for teachers of Advanced Placement science courses at Lexington High School to get through their curricula, the harsh weather has had very little impact on AP mathematics classes.

LHS has one-year AP science courses. Students begin AP knowing very little subject material and need to learn a college level science course in seven months. Sarah Legge, an AP Biology teacher, has her double lab blocks on Mondays, but her class has missed so many Mondays that the amount of time her students had in the lab was greatly impacted.

"I do feel that [my] students will be more than prepared by the time of the AP test," Legge said, "but I think that the AP Chemistry teachers are feeling the crunch of time the most as they have a lot of material that still needs to be taught before the exam and their AP exam falls on the first day of AP testing." The AP Chemistry exam is on May 4 this year.

"I always plan to complete all the content by April vacation," AP Chemistry teacher Parul Kumar said. "This year I am about a week behind my schedule due to snow days. I am doing review sessions before school to make up for those missed days."

Teachers of classes at all levels, have been finding ways around the lost class time.

Sarah Damassa, an Honors Environmental Earth Science teacher, said she "delayed a couple of quizzes, posted homework on the website and has sent mass emails to students on snow days".

In addition. the science fair had to be rescheduled due to the snow, creating another burden for the science faculty. Teachers involved had to ensure that the judges would be able to attend the rescheduled fair. Not all the judges could make it and several teachers had to judge instead.

"This created a lot of work for the teachers and staff that help to organize the fair," said Legge.

In contrast, snow days have had little impact on math courses. "For some reason, the content to be covered in [AP AB] Calculus is pretty easy to get through and we always have weeks to review," said AP AB Calculus teacher Jim Williams. "It seems to me that the other subject courses have a brutal amount to cover even without disruptions."

Some teachers have rescheduled lessons in response to the snow days.

"In some cases I have combined lessons if they contained material that does not appear on the AP exam, to preserve the opportunity for practice exams during the month of April," said Allen Olsen, an AP BC Calculus teacher.

A possible explanation for the varied difficulties in responding to the snow days for science and mathematics teachers is the lack of preparatory courses in the sciences.

For instance, LHS students take a pre-calculus course called Advanced Mathematics, which "covers enough topics that it is never a problem to finish the [calculus] curriculum," said Dea Haupt an AP BC Calculus teacher.

In most high schools, a student would take biology during their sophomore year and then take AP Biology during their senior year. However, since LHS tries to combine two of these courses into one year, snow days may have a larger impact on AP science classes than on AP mathematics classes.

Faculty advocates for School Committee to reduce teacher load

■ William Zen
Staff Writer

Many teachers at Lexington High School want the School Committee to reduce the teaching load from five classes to four classes.

LHS social studies teacher Erin Barrett said that full-time teachers in most departments, including math, social studies and world language, must teach five classes.

However, English teachers and most science teachers must teach four classes, while some AP science teachers teach three classes because some AP science classes meet six times a week.

LHS biology teacher Reginald Hobbs teaches four total Level 1 and Conceptual Biology classes, each of which meet five times a week, for 20 total hours. Teachers who teach three AP classes have 18 teaching hours, so they teach in the Science Skills Center for another two hours, Hobbs said.

LHS English teacher Andrew Baker said English teachers teach only four classes because they have to grade more writing assignments.

In addition, Baker said, "because other teachers have to teach five classes, writing instruction has been pretty much reduced to the English classroom."

In 2002, LHS principal Ernest Van Seasholes successfully advocated for the School Committee to lower the workload to four classes per teacher, said LHS mathematics teacher Wendy Cordero.

However, when the override on Proposition 2 1/2 was not passed in 2006, the teacher workload was increased in order to balance the budget. In 2009, a School Committee subcommittee suggested that the workload be reduced to four classes per teacher, but no action was taken.

Last year, Barrett and Cordero went to the School Committee to advocate that some of the money allocated to future capital expenditures be used to decrease teacher workload, but again, no action was taken.

The cost of reducing teacher workload from five classes to four would be $1.3 million, said President of the Lexington Education Association Phyllis Neufeld.

This year, multiple LHS teachers attended a public budget hearing on Jan. 31, and several teachers, students and parents attended another hearing on Feb. 10, but the budget was approved as previously submitted.

LHS French teacher Rina Farber-Mazor said that the School Committee will reconsider a change in the teacher workload when the teachers' contracts are renegotiated.

LPS Superintendent Paul Ash considers the teacher workload issue to be a district issue, Barrett said. This means that changes made to the workload of LHS teachers would also apply to the workload of teachers at other schools.

Mark Rosenberg and Mayukha Karnam contributed to writing and reporting.

TENNIS - PAGE 8

Pugliese learned the importance of team chemistry from the championship run last year. Even though last year's team was missing its best player, Pugliese said, "the way our team stayed positive and believed they could take the title home was the clincher for me."

Pugliese also recognized the importance of doubles pairings. He said, "I'm going to put more stress on myself to closely working with my double teams in the future since the back points in a match are very important to the team win."

Another challenge that the team is facing is the delayed opening for the season due to the weather. The snow forced Pugliese to start tryouts two and a half weeks late. Seong said that as a result, the team is very behind on practice.

Even though matches are coming up, the team has only played indoors thus far. Mcgeown said that the team will play its first match on April 6 without any official outdoor practices.

Pugliese knows that other teams are dealing with the same situation, and hopes that the situation will not "affect our game plan for the season," he said.

Fortunately, "everyone is still practicing individually, and we have good coaches and a good team, so I think we'll pull through," Seong said.

Since the team won the state championship last year, they know they have become the team to beat. Mcgeown is confident that they can "keep winning even with these teams doing everything they can do to beat us," he said.

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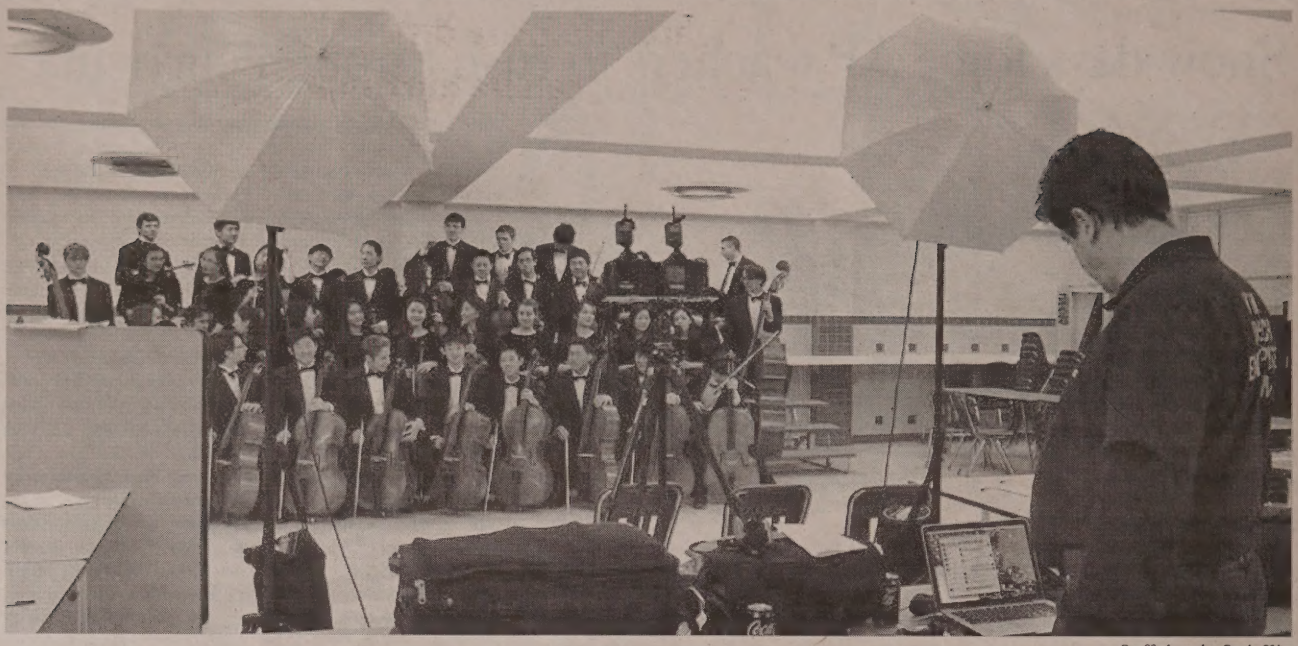


Staff photo by Susie Kim

An employee of Jolesch Enterprises, a national photomarketing organization, takes pictures of the LHS Chamber Orchestra during the MICAA Fesitval.

LHS hosts MICCA Concert Festival; several LHS ensembles perform

Catherine Cheng
Hanna Tuomi
Staff Writers

This year's Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association Festival took place over three days at Lexington High School, as well as several other locations in Massachusetts.

The festivals include the Concert Festival, Marching Band Festival, Choral Festival and the Solo and Ensemble Festival. LHS hosts the Concert Festival.

At the MICCA festivals, each ensemble is allotted 30 minutes to perform for a panel of judges.

The performance is then scored using the Concert Festival Performance Rubric, put together by the festival's conductors. The rubric evaluates the groups in a variety of aspects including blend, phrasing and rhythm, using a scale from one to five, with five being "Superior" and one being "Needs Improvement."

After the performance, students and conductors attend a 20-minute clinic, where conductors give their input on the performance and help the group improve upon their performance.

At the end of the event, awards and medals are given to the top scoring groups. The groups also receive a recording of their performance along with their score sheets. Those who are awarded with a gold medal may be chosen to perform either at Worcester's Mechanics Hall or at Boston's Symphony Hall.

Many LHS students compete in the festival as a mandatory event for a music class they are enrolled in. Normally, groups must pay $250 to participate in a festival, but since LHS hosts, the festival costs are lower.

LHS's music ensembles have medaled at several previous MICCA festivals. The LHS orchestras have never received anything below a Silver Medal since LHS Performing Arts Director Jeffrey Leonard introduced Lexington to the MICCA Festival. Other groups also have a history of scoring well.

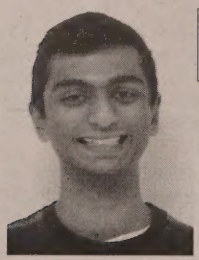
Students and conductors alike were excited for MICCA.

"I am most excited to hear the other orchestras perform, and get feedback on our own performance from other conductors," says freshman Isha Jha, a violinist in Repertoire Orchestra. "A new perspective is always refreshing."

Freshman Yooni Park, a Soprano II in Honors Chorus, said that she was looking forward to have the opportunity to sing competitively against other schools.

For LHS music teachers, the MICCA Festival is an opportunity to gauge the work their groups do in rehearsal.

Janet Haas, conductor of the Chamber Orchestra and Repertoire Orchestra, said she hopes that "my students will feel proud of their performance and that their performance truly reflects all the work that has happened in rehearsal."



collegebored

Let's keep LHS a No Flex Zone

Ashvin Antony
Columnist

No flex zone, no flex zone
They know better, they know better
No flex zone, no flex zone
They know better, they know better

Though lyrically abysmal, Rae Sremmurd's hit rap song, "No Flex Zone," can be applied to an oh-so-stressful time of the year. The No Flex Zone described by Rae Sremmurd is a place free of flaunting one's accomplishments or judging one another. This can be applied to the aftermath of college decisions, which create a dichotomy of utter elation and sheer disappointment.

Here at Lexington High School, we have a renowned admissions reputation due to the many college acceptances to elite universities.

With such a stout resume of college acceptances every year, we ever-so-competitive LHS students get trapped in a mindset of categorization.

Let's face it, whenever college decisions' time rolls around, most of us (I, too, am a culprit), to some sort of extent, subconsciously define and judge others, and even ourselves, based on where we've all gotten into college.

Those who have received successful admission to "prestigious" universities may be labeled by others, and perhaps even him/herself, as being holistically superior to those who did not have as "prestigious" results with their college admissions.

As a result, it seems as though students' livelihoods and futures become based solely on where they have gotten into college, even though they have yet to depart from their teenage years.

Though it may be human nature to judge others, defining one's future, success, or intelligence solely off of one's college admission results is a narrow-minded, ignorant and wrongful mentality. Heck, we all haven't even begun our college and career lives yet. Who knows what will happen?

No matter where you go after this year, the same level of success can be reached. To put it bluntly, all that matters is what you make out of your college experience, regardless of which school you attend.

If you happened to have gotten into one of your first-choice, top-notch schools, you should be proud of all the hard work you put into your high school accomplishments, but you should still have restraint. Do not adopt the judgmental mindset of feeling superior to others, as that will only result in excessive pride and complacency.

If college admissions didn't go your way, don't beat yourself up. Your future is still bright. Be proud of the earnest effort you put into your academics and extracurriculars, and don't think that the last four years of your life were a waste.

You still have just as much potential as anyone else to carve a successful future, so don't consider yourself inferior to others. Use your "unsatisfactory" college decisions as motivation to flourish and truly channel your potential at whatever school you end up going to.

Just as Rae Sremmurd said in the chorus of "No Flex Zone," "we know better" than to create an environment of judgement at this time of the year. Let's keep LHS a No Flex Zone, as we seniors round out a memorable four years.

Spring musical, "Into the Woods," opens on May 7

■ Alexandria Snyders
Dykeman
Dabin Kang
Staff Writers

The Lexington High School Drama Department's musical, "Into the Woods," will open on May 7.

"Into the Woods," a popular musical by Stephen Sondheim based on the book by James Lapine, is a collection of fairy tales including characters such as Jack the Giant Killer and Rapunzel.

"[Sondheim] weaves all their stories together and they all live in the same kingdom," said stage manager and senior Samantha Berman. "And they all just have to … go into the woods to get something specific that they need."

Ethan Embry, a senior and actor in the LHS production, who viewed Disney's recent movie adaptation of the musical, said, "I still think the staged version is a lot better. There are [cooler] plot lines and it is a lot funnier."

Director Jillian Singer-Wong isn't worried that the audience may have different expectations for the LHS production after seeing the Disney movie production.

"[The audience] should understand that there is a difference in creating a musical and creating a movie. Instead of being worried about their expectations, we're all really excited," Singer-Wong said.

This year's musical is also different from previous years due to its length and cast size.

Embry said, "This show is long. It is about two and a half hours long. We also have a small cast this year, with 24 people in total in the cast. Usually the musicals have around 40 to 50 people in total."

The LHS actors are putting their own original twist on the musical.

"The director encourages the actors to not necessarily base their decisions [and] their characters off of things they've seen in other productions," Berman said. "So I guess we're taking it as inspiration."

Some believe that Singer-Wong's choices make this production better than past productions.

"I honestly like the director's style for this show better than the original Broadway cast's," Embry said, referring to the music, blocking and lighting of the show.

There is also a behind the scenes effort that is put in to support the show.

"The technical director and a group of students are working on the set, designing it, coming up with the concepts, basically what it looks like," Berman said. "And the whole tech crew helps build it, and to assemble it, to put it on stage."

There is also a lot of hands-on work during the performances, including scenery movement, lighting and sound work.

Staff photo by Susie Kim

Sophomores Sophia Ryterband and Jongtae Jeon and juniors Katharine Courtemanche and Karina Wen rehearse for "Into the Woods."

Overheard: Slurs are disturbingly prevalent in Lexington, can be hurtful and damaging

■ Alana Kepler
Columnist

Overheard in the halls, on the bus and in class: "F-----!"

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me."

This old adage has been disproved time and time again, and yet many continue to believe that being affected by slurs like "f-----" is a result of hypersensitivity. Despite the extensive and violent history of slurs being used as cannon fodder, many believe that their use is acceptable in so-called "changing times."

This is inaccurate for a number of reasons. First, while times may be a-changin', they haven't changed completely. In many ways, old oppressive systems are simply being replaced by new ones. Even in the "liberal bubble" of Lexington, slurs like "f-----" are disturbingly prevalent. Second, slurs may be words, but they're the kind that forebode damage done by sticks and stones.

Slurs are dangerous not for their etymologies, but for their long histories of violent use. Words like "f-----" are displays of privilege which reinforce existing societal inequalities.

A 2012 study by the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network showed that up to 56 percent of L.G.B.T.+ students were significantly less likely than non-L.G.B.T.+ students to attend school due to bullies' disproportionate targeting of gender-nonconforming individuals.

Especially in educational environments, language represents the threat of violence and the instilling of fear.

While "f-----" has a significantly more violent history than other heterosexist terms, apparently innocuous words like "homosexual" and "gay," when used as nouns, evoke a similar history of dehumanization and of reduction to clinical terms.

As a culture, we often neglect to recognize the systemic nature of our language. The words we choose demonstrate our cultural heritage, including our positions on various axes of oppression.

The reason L.G.B.T.+ people can use heterosexist slurs like q---- while others cannot is because it is impossible to assert a power you do not have. Marginalized people cannot oppress themselves, so their use of slurs functions as a reclamation of their own history. However, no one should use a slur which would not be applied to them.

Language may seem like a small thing, and for many, it may be so. But it's important to emphasize that no phrase exists in a vacuum.

Decontextualization of our linguistic choices detracts from progress and diminishes the contributions of many human rights activists by demonstrating a total disregard for the value of human emotional safety.

So please, choose your f-words wisely.

After fundraising and planning, LHS choral students departing for 11-day trip through China on April 15

■ Steph Glass
Staff Writer

A group of 105 students involved in the LHS choral program will soon be boarding a plane to China, where they will be performing for a variety of audiences.

The students, including members of the Madrigal Singers, Concert Choir and Women's Chorus and chaperones will leave April 15 and return April 26.

The students will perform a wide variety of songs, including Chinese classics such as "Mo Li Hua", a popular folk song, and more modern numbers in English such as "Stomp Your Foot" the 1954 opera "The Tender Land."

The group will also be participating in two exchanges. The first will be with Lexington's sister school in Hangzhou, where previous Chinese exchange trips have engaged in a five-day homestay. Additionally, the group will meet up with the all-male choir of Shanghai Hangjing High School and perform with them at the He Luting Concert Hall.

Senior Sara Mael said she is looking forward to the concert halls the group will be performing in, comparing their acoustics to those of churches.

She is particularly excited for the opportunity to hear the pieces the students will be performing.

"[The groups] haven't gotten to perform [their repertoire] in any incredible spaces yet," and hoping the concert halls will allow them to "bring it to the next level," she said.

On Feb. 28, the chorus program ran a fundraiser for the trip called Passport to China. The event, advertised as a night of Chinese culture, included traditional Chinese dancers, a martial arts troupe from Wellesley College and a pan-Asian buffet.

There was also a screening of a documentary on an ex-Communist artist who left China, which drew criticism from students who felt the film gave a one-sided view of China.

In response, Iannuzzi said, "We're not indoctrinating the students. It's a film, we're putting it there, we're going to discuss it."

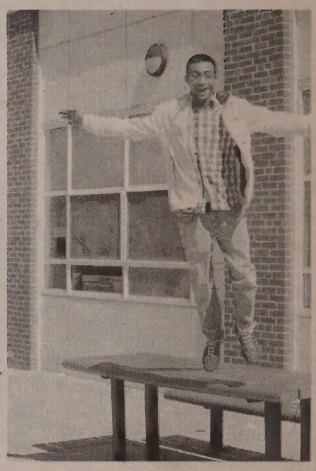
Iannuzzi said the event was meant to fundraise and increase community support for the trip. However, Passport to China did not make as much money as hoped. "It was a really rich, and interesting, and multifaceted event. As a fundraiser we did okay," he said. "It wasn't advertised very well."

Iannuzzi is prepared for any potential problems that may arise on the trip.

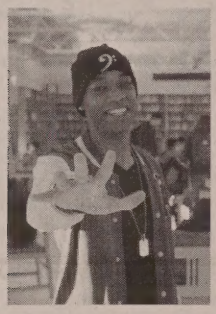
"We have sort of a protocol in place, because we don't want to put ourselves in a dangerous position and we don't want to offend people," he said.

The rest of the trip will be occupied with "typical tourist stuff," said Mael. This includes a visit to the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, the Terracotta Warriors of Xi'an and West Lake in Hangzhou.

HUMANS OF LHS



"Humans of LHS is a Facebook page that posts portraits of the students and faculty of LHS along with quotes about their life experiences. I started the page in October of 2013 ... A couple others joined in as photographers and they have taught me everything about photography and critiqued me and together we have all grown both as photographers and as people. The interviewing aspect of HOLHS is probably the most difficult, but through [HOLHS] it has been easier to connect on a human level, not just with the people at LHS, but with everyone."
- Amanda Lin, senior



HOLHS Facts
Likes: 2,034
Created: Oct. 2013
Page Founder and Club President: Amanda Lin
Faculty Advisor: Damian Barneschi
Photos Posted: 342

Photos courtesy of Amanda Lin, Evan Simkowitz, Chao Zheng Li, Michelle Nizhnikov and Kat Neal.

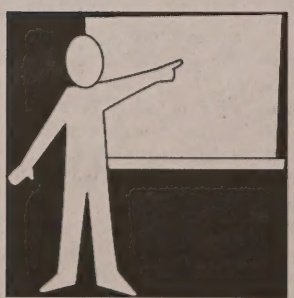
STUDENT JOBS

ERIC XIA
CHINESE TEACHER

"My job is being a teacher of a math class at the Chinese School at the Cambridge Center for Chinese Culture. I get to make kids think hard. I'm not restricted to following a curriculum so I can teach material that is as hard as I want. I can entertain their questions about some random thing not very related to the lesson at hand and at the end of the day, they are better thinkers, better learners,and better problem solvers."
– Eric Xia, junior

JAMES YU
ASSISTANT PE TEACHER

"I did many different things [at Hayden Recreation Centre] ranging from being an assistant PE teacher to managing the weight room. While I was a PE teacher it allowed me to work with kids, which I really enjoy doing. It gave me my first bit of job experience and taught me work ethic."
– James Yu, senior



CHRIS SMITH
SWIM COACH

"I teach young kids how to swim and help them get better at it and feel more comfortable in the water. I also coach a recreational swim team. I like teaching the lessons mainly because it's enjoyable to teach and experience what it must have been like for me when I was little before I became a competitive swimmer."
– Chris Smith, senior

ANJEE YOO
CASHIER

"I worked at Stop and Shop in Lexington as a cashier and Self Scan attendant, and I really enjoyed it because it taught me new skills and the people I worked with were all very nice to be around."
– Anjee Yoo, senior

Images are courtesy of Creative Commons

SAT - PAGE 2

ing junior and senior year. It should be first established that SAT stress is not something that simply exists, but is cultivated by a variety of factors.

"The biggest source of SAT stress is everyone else," Corrine Auger, a junior at LHS, said. "You see your friends worrying about it and you assume that they're better prepared and that you ought to be even more concerned … the chain reaction is especially strong and constantly reinforced here."

Laura Case, a junior who took the test in March, notes the prevalence of parental pressure in an email interview.

"In Lexington there is a congregation of highly successful parents who expect the same excellence from their child," Case wrote in an email. "Everyone has entered a competitive fray wanting to meet the desires of well-intentioned parents."

Personally, I attribute SAT stress to what can be described as a "Lexington bubble" — essentially a mental and cultural isolation driven by local influences. Because we are living in an affluent community with a reputation for high academic achievement, there is an ingrained pressure in Lexington to succeed and a certain affinity for any medium that can quantify that success.

As a result, people tend to confer excessive weight onto the SAT which, aside from being a college admission requirement, compares student ability on a national level.

"It is scary to know how much of an impact this test has on determining your post high school direction," Case said. "Disappointment and failure are very real fears among the LHS student body."

The Lexington community's high level of achievement also raises normal standards. Most students aren't even aware of the national average for the SAT exam - a 1500, according to the CollegeBoard website. This is an unfamiliar figure compared to the normal LHS range, which usually comes closer to a 1900 according to the LHS School Profile for the Class of 2014.

This elevated perception of "average" skews students' aims upward, resulting in increased stress, anxiety and preparation. Moreover, competitive students often feel obligated to meet personal standards as well as the standards of the colleges they seek to attend, but also to outperform their peers.

This is not to say that motivation, determination and ambition are not good qualities. However, the danger of internalizing expectations fostered by the "Lexington bubble" is that many lose sight of a larger context and develop a distorted perspective that, while born from short term concerns such as the SAT, can have long lasting consequences.

So how can we counter the danger of becoming trapped inside the "Lexington bubble" of SAT pressure? Even while putting in your best effort, acknowledge that personal limits do legitimately exist and should not be ignored. Prepare with the mentality, dedication and confidence you think merits a perfect score, but know that it will never be a guaranteed outcome. Realize that doing well on the test is a blessing, not a rite of passage, and certainly not a determinant of self-worth.

ISRAEL - PAGE 2

ranged the speech without White House approval. To go behind the president's back on something as important as Iran is an affront to the millions of American taxpayers that contribute to Israel's security each year through billions of dollars' worth of military aid.

LHS junior Ruth Landis said that "the invoking of the Holocaust" during the speech, as well as the presence of Holocaust survivor and ardent Netanyahu supporter Elie Wiesel, "was a little bit of a power play on Netanyahu's part, which was unnecessary."

"The speech was on March 3. The elections are on March 17. The whole situation is obviously tied into the election," Landis said. However, Landis said that it was "important that Netanyahu spoke to the U.S. population about Iran, because it's something that Israel and the U.S. disagree about."

Daniel Orgad, a sophomore and Israeli citizen, said he watched "select parts" of the speech. "I think it was a last minute scheme to get more votes," he said. "The election's really tight in Israel."

Other Jewish LHS student had similar opinions regarding their Prime Minister. Sophomore Dvir Blander even said, "Netanyahu is a clown."

But in wake of the recent Israeli elections, Netanyahu remains powerful. His right-wing Likud party won a majority of seats in the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset. Netanyahu now serves his fourth term as Prime Minister.

In addition to using footage of the speech in his campaign, Netanyahu vowed to fight against a two-state solution in the last hours of the election. He made racist remarks about Arab Israelis, proclaiming that "the Arabs are voting in droves," and appealed to religious zealots by promising more Jewish settlements on Arab land. Netanyahu's extreme remarks changed my perception of him from a hawkish politician to something else entirely: a radical.

I agree that it's important to discuss Iran in the United States and at LHS, where we have natives of both countries. I disagree with the paradigm that Netanyahu should lead the discussion, or even factor into the equation at all. Congress already has a plurality of right-wing lawmakers willing to criticize a nuke deal. We don't need to import them from Israel. Netanyahu should stay out of US-Iranian relations from now on.

SPRING SPORTS - PAGE 8

"It's not like we're in a bubble and all the snow fell in Lexington," Pagliuca said.

However, in some cases, teams are at a disadvantage.

"Some other schools are allowed to shovel their tracks but we are not able to do that," Bill Babcock, the LHS girls' varsity track head coach said. "Not being able to throw the discus and javelin or perform the long jump and the triple jump is a huge disadvantage. Every school in Middlesex League we compete against has turf inside of their track whereas we have grass. We are unable to step on the field until the town gives us the go ahead."

As long as there is snow on the ground, not much can be done to remedy the problem.

"We need Mother Nature to cooperate a bit," Martin said.

EDITORIAL- PAGE 2

importantly though, on top of that lies a student body that may lack the traditional example of school spirit but support each other nonetheless. Though we might snicker at the red clown noses we wear once a year or yawn our way through the homeroom destress exercises, we do take efforts to encourage our peers and make sure we stay more open-minded.

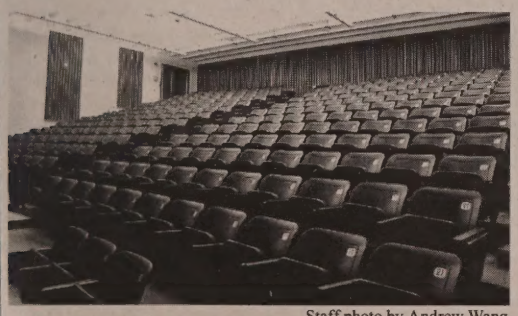
Although the presence of cliques tends to hinder an overarching sense of community, however it is also beneficial when the people in those groups support each other through stress and cheer each other on through success. And LHS has people like that, which is why it continues to thrive without a huge emphasis on school spirit.

Though we are not devoid of school spirit, there are some things we can keep in mind when trying to foster a greater sense of a school-wide community.

We can look back to our earlier years at elementary school, where events such as "Field Day" brought the whole school together by competing in silly yet fun events, and relate them to more teenage-related activities, such as actual sports or other more challenging mini-games.

Additionally, despite the administration's best intents, trying to plan events that will "bring more school spirit" often times seems contrived and does not achieve its goal of bringing students together.

Ultimately, maybe LHS isn't meant to fit into the stereotype of what school spirit should look like. LHS is extraordinary on so many other levels — our athletes, our performers, and our academic accomplishments. Our school spirit does not need to follow the model we see from other schools — we can strive to create our own sense of unity through what already binds us together.



Staff photo by Andrew Wang

Detention is held in the Science Lecture Hall after school.

DETENTION - PAGE 2

to work in a distracting, electronic filled environment, kids are forced into a quiet study hall for an hour to do homework productively – not too bad of a tradeoff.

At most, detentions may be considered annoying or embarrassing.

Ranjana Sundaram, who graduated from LHS last year, said, "[Detentions] were just a waste of time. I was sitting in a room with all the other usual offenders."

From exposure to media and TV stereotypes, we often assume detentions are given to the school punks, rebels, and criminals.

Many times, it is the fear of being associated with this image rather than the fear of actually sitting in the Science Lecture Hall for an hour that worries students when they get detentions.

This is especially true at Lexington, where many high achievers, who take their performance in school seriously fear being labeled as an irresponsible culprit.

Aside from threatening a bad image, detentions fail to punish students. They leave no trace on student transcripts and do not deter bad behavior. Many of the kids in detention are regulars, which proves the failure of the system.

LHS could do a better job of promoting a safe environment if administrators sought to reform the current detention policy.

If students received more constructive punishment, such as being assigned community service, not only would that benefit the district's environment, it might help improved the behavior of the supposed "criminals" of our school.

THANK YOU

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New LHS fencing team competing at meets around the state

■ Colin Cantwell
Staff Writer

The recently formed Lexington High School fencing team has been competing around the region this year.

The team was founded by junior Anna Zhou and senior Claudia Sun at the beginning of this school year. Zhou was inspired to create the fencing team while at national competitions. She heard people talk about fencing for their schools and thought that there would be significant interest for the sport at LHS. Both Zhou and Sun also fence at Gold Fencing Club in Waltham.

Zhou and Sun tried to start the team at the end of last year, but were not able to find an adviser. Once they found their adviser, LHS math teacher Walter Richardson, they began recruiting new members at the Activities Fair. The fencing team is not a part of the athletic department, but is instead one of the many clubs at LHS.

They currently have about 15 fencers across all three disciplines: Foil, Saber, and Epee. The fencing team is coed, but is short on women's saber and epee competitors. Most of the club's saber and epee fencers are new to the sport, while a majority of the foil fencers compete outside of LHS.

Sean DiPietro, a sophomore epee competitor, said, "I took fencing for gym last year and loved it."

Sophomore saber fencer Edgar Fu, said he joined because he was searching for a new challenge.

The fencing team competed in eight meets and several invitationals this year. It participated in meets at Concord-Carlisle High School and St. John's Prep and has qualified for the state tournaments. Both the men's and women's foil teams won their respective titles at states, while the sabers and epees placed.

Zhou finished first individually in the women's foil event, with Sun coming in second and teammate Vivian Li, a freshman, finishing fifth. Freshman Julian Cheng finished second overall in the men's event, while freshman Jonathan Liu finished fifth. The women's foil team is undefeated so far.

Staff photo by Claudia Sun

Sophomore Yohan Lee, a member of the new LHS fencing team, fences men's epee.

"I'm truly amazed by the level of enthusiasm and devotion that the fencers have for the sport. It just feels like a tight-knit community where we can trust each other and have fun," Zhou said.

The team travels to the New England Movement Arts in Burlington every Tuesday after school to practice, where they work with coach Fritz Chang.

"It's one of those things that you look forward to at the end of the day," fencer Michael Tu, a sophomore said.

Record snowfall hinders spring sports training

■ Matthew Weiss
Staff Writer

Record amounts of snowfall have hit Lexington and the Greater Boston area this winter, affecting the schedules of many spring sports. Snow still covers many athletic fields, impeding outdoor sports practices.

"The weather has been obviously a challenge, to say the least," Naomi Martin, the Lexington Public Schools Director of Athletics said.

Being stuck inside affects many aspects of springs sports, including team selection.

"We have to evaluate kids and select teams without being on our natural surface," Francis Pagliuca, the Lexington High School varsity softball head coach said. "It makes it difficult and challenging for us."

The weather has been difficult for the athletes as well.

"The kids, obviously, are itching to get outside, but there's nothing we really can do about it," Pagliuca said.

With outside space limited by snow, teams have been forced to utilize whatever indoor space is available, often away from the high school.

"We've worked to line up some outside space over at The Edge in Bedford, which has a covered bubble. We actually worked with the DPW [Department of Public Works] and got some fields plowed up at Lincoln," Martin said.

When they aren't at these spaces, however, teams are limited to the LHS gym and the LHS field house, or any other space they can find.

"Because of the weather, we had two weeks in the field house, but then the other teams started their sports so we didn't have the field house any more," said Isaac Benghiat, a junior and member of the LHS Ultimate Frisbee team, "so now we're just running around wherever we can, we're using the commons, and we're just running outside. It's nowhere near as good as if we had the fields, where we could actually practice frisbee."

However, the snow has affected all the towns in the area, so LHS teams aren't always set back more than others.

[SPRING SPORTS, page 7]

Staff photo by Chao Zheng Li

Senior Andrea Mael practices ultimate frisbee with teammates in Commons I.

Boys' tennis team begins title defense

■ Richard Huang
Staff Writer

After winning the Massachusetts Division I state championship last year, the boys' varsity tennis team is looking to defend its title this spring.

Eleven seniors, including five starters, graduated from the team last year. This leaves holes in the roster, but coach Chris Pugliese is confident that this year's players will be able to fill in.

Pugliese said that he is "very happy and optimistic for ... players on the team that have not been in the starting role" before.

Senior Daniel Seong, a captain of the tennis team, said "we still have good players, and our team is very deep, so even if some people leave, I know that our team will still be strong."

Even though the team lacks some varsity experience, senior Max Mcgeown, a captain, said that "the entire team has been working extremely hard in the off season to make up for that."

[TENNIS, page 3]